



Disability Compensation for Sexual or Personal Trauma

A number of women and men suffered sexual or other personal trauma while serving on active military duty. These veterans may still struggle with fear, anxiety, embarrassment, or profound anger as a result of these experiences. We cannot undo the past; however, if a veteran suffers from the effects of trauma in military service, VA may be able to help them.

How Does VA Define Sexual or Personal Trauma?

Sexual or personal trauma are events of human design that threaten or inflict harm. Trauma is defined as any lingering physical, emotional, or psychological symptoms. Examples of trauma are:

- Rape,
- Physical assault,
- Domestic battering, and
- Stalking

Can You Receive Compensation for Your Disabilities?

Disability compensation is a monthly payment to a veteran disabled by an injury or a disease incurred or aggravated on active service. You must have been discharged under *other than dishonorable* conditions to be eligible, and must currently suffer from disabling symptoms to receive compensation. A common disability resulting from a sexual or personal trauma is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Secondary to Sexual or Personal Trauma

PTSD is a recurrent emotional reaction to a terrifying, uncontrollable, or life-threatening event.

The symptoms may develop immediately after the event or may be delayed for years. They include:

- Sleep disturbances and nightmares,
- Emotional instability,
- Feelings of fear and anxiety,
- Impaired concentration,
- Flash-backs, and
- Problems in intimate and other interpersonal relations.

How Can You Apply?

You can apply for disability compensation by filling out VA Form 21-526, *Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension*. VA counselors and Women Veterans Coordinators are available for assistance.

You can also apply online through our web site at <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp>.

**For More Information, Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000
or Visit Our Web Site at <http://www.va.gov>.**